

NEW PUBLICATIONS.

A BIOGRAPHY OF MARCEAU.

FRANCOIS SEVERIN MARCEAU, 1799-1866. By Captain T. G. Johnson, L. S. C. Pub. by S. G. French Bell & Sons, New-York. Macmillan & Co.

Born in the same year with Napoleon Bonaparte, Marceau, like Roche, is an evidence of the prodigality with which nature gave military genius of the first order to France at the moment when the Revolution was impending. The coincidence is startling. It is almost impossible to a proof that the Revolution was provided for beforehand, as something that must take place. The eulogists of Marceau and Roche, Captain Johnson among the rest, are willing to believe that if either of them had lived to guide the destinies of the nation, no imperial despotism like that of Napoleon would have been thought of. There is also a heretic or two in the world who imagines that even Washington, indifferent as he was to mere possession of power, might have prolonged his dictatorship in a country like France, striving for order as he had first striven for independence. Captain Johnson calls Napoleon "the fiend of Europe and the most terrible citizen that ever scourged a state." But he was in his earlier days as much a Republican as any of his brothers in arms. He lived to prove that his convictions were easily changed. Roche and Marceau died before the gradual rise of democratic enthusiasm of their youth. But there is nothing aside from words and from a certain quality of mercy and kindness in the disposition of both that would prove them incapable of seizing a despotism if it were offered them. Captain Johnson's book will be scanned in vain for any more definite ideas on this subject in Marceau's mind than are usually cherished by youth, to be replaced by less benevolent feelings in old age.

Marceau had good reason for disliking the nobles of the Old Monarchy. They were in his way. His whole soul was turned to the profession of a soldier. He entered the army at the age of sixteen, and at once displayed singular aptitude for military life. But he soon learned that promotion above the lowest grades was impossible for him. The high places were for noblemen, whether they were capable or not, and even moderate rank was accessible only for men of the middle class who had money. As Marceau was poor, his skill as a soldier and his attention to his duties won him nothing better than the privilege of instructing "certain impudent and reckless young officers" in the regiment to which he belonged. To these well-born creatures Marceau and his comrades were as if beings of another species. His disgust with the service was great. But the Revolution changed all this at a stroke. Merit was free. It might bring a man to the guillotine, but at all events it no longer added a sting to the contempt of a class whose brains had been frittered away in a long line of ancestors. The contemptuous class had disappeared, blown away by the popular tumult as mosquitoes are whisked off from a sandy coast by a whiff of air from the sea. From the date of his enrolment in the National Guard, Marceau's rise was rapid, and he was a general at the age of twenty-three.

So youthful did he look that his appearance before the Committee of Safety in his uniform, according to the rules of the service, was almost the signal for a riot. As he stood in the hall of the National Convention, awaiting the opportunity to call upon the Committee, he became the object of angry comment. It was a novel experience to the man who had put down the formidable rebellion of the Royalists in La Vendée. Was it any wonder, asked one deputy of another, that the armies of the Republic were beaten by the Committee of Safety in his uniform, of a general?" One bitter word followed another till the hall was in an uproar, and the subject was about to be brought before the Convention, when the notorious deputy Bourbouche entered the Chamber. Now, this Bourbouche had once done his best to bring Marceau to the guillotine, but

In the Vendee war he was saved in the nick of time from the vengeance of a party of Royalists by the man he had injured, and from that moment, contradicting the popular proverb, had been his most faithful friend. To Bourbouche, indeed, Marceau owed much of his advancement. "What is it all about?" asked Bourbouche. "That young officer?" was the answer. "What Marceau! My friend Marceau!" Whereupon there was first an embrace in right French fashion, and then a wilder tumult than ever in the hall, with shouts for Marceau and for the Republic, and allusions to the recent victory of Le Mans, which had destroyed the last remnant of the Vendean forces.

If youth enhanced the glory of Marceau's achievements as a commander, it also confused the estimate that must be put on his words and acts in point of humanity. There is no doubt that the indiscriminate slaughter of the Vendees ordered by the Republican leaders and eagerly carried out by the soldiery with the approval of many officers was revolting to him. He prevented it whenever he could, and protested against it over and over again. His name lives to this day less in his deeds of arms than in his efforts to save the Vendean girl, Angelique Des Mestiers, from death and worse than death. He saved her for a few days, but the guillotine cheated him when his back was turned. On the other hand, there was the same false note in his reports that sounds through most of the official literature of the Revolution. Captain Johnson has translated some of his letters from Le Mans to the Minister of War. It is not some amateur general and professional ruffian like Rossignol or Turreau, fresh from a Parisian drunks, it is Marceau who writes: "I can assure you that more than three thousand fanatics bite the dust at this moment." In an official document he is not ashamed to write of a gallant enemy as "rascals" and "brigands" and "robbers." Doubtless these phrases were concessions to the rhetorical spirit of the times. But when moderation of language would really have been a mark of the genuine soldier, it is strange that Marceau did not govern his pen. What is to be considered is whether a man capable at twenty-three of this artificial resentment and denunciation would not have been capable at thirty of taking advantage of the State, if he had lived to enjoy the opportunity.

Fortunately, Marceau had other experiences besides those of a bitter and shameful civil war. He showed in meeting the leaders of a foreign that he could forget the excitement of the battlefield in the geniality of friendly conversation. There were men arrayed against him in battles along the Rhine who loved him as dearly as he did any of his comrades. That little scene when the Archduke Charles, a man as young as he and even a greater soldier, came to look at him dead, could not have been less than genuine. You can see the youthful conqueror of Jourdan, as he gazes on the handsome face of Marceau; you see him kneel by the bedside; you see him covering his eyes with his hands as he walks away, and you feel that there was something in Marceau to win, not merely the admiration, but the sympathy of other men. The incident could not have been just the same, if, for example, the dead general had been Napoleon. Somehow Napoleon did not win the sympathy of his enemies either when he was dead or when he was alive. But then he did not appear to feel the need of sympathy—an important consideration, and one that should not be overlooked.

BOOKS OF THE WEEK.

VETERINARY HOMOEOPATHY. By John Sturtevant. (Philadelphia: Beebe & Taylor.)

POPULAR SCIENTIFIC LECTURES. By Ernst Mach. 12mo, pp. 250. (Chicago: The Open Court Publishing Company.)

SWEETHEART TRAVELERS. A Child's Book for Children for Women and for Men. By S. R. Crockett. Crown 8vo, pp. 214. (Frederick A. Stokes Company.)

A LONELY SPA. By Mrs. Hungerford. (The

Duchess). 16mo, pp. 262. G. R. Lippincott Company.

HENRY ODESS. By Marcus Clarke. 16mo, pp. 380. G. R. Lippincott Company.

CAMP'S QUARTERS, AND CASUAL PLACES. By Archibald Forbes. 12mo, pp. 344. (The Macmillan Company.)

THE FISHER LASS. Translated from the Norwegian in the New Edition of the Novels of Björnsterne Björnson. Edited by Edmund Gosse. 16mo, pp. 299. (The Macmillan Company.)

THE FISHER LASS. Translated from the Russian by George Garnett. The volumes in the New Edition of the Novels of Ivan Turgenev. 16mo, pp. Vol. I. 244. Vol. II. 262. (The Macmillan Company.)

HUMPHRY DAVY: POET AND PHILOSOPHER. By George Ticknor Curtis. In Two Volumes. Vol. II. Edited by Joseph Culbertson Clayton. 8vo, Cloth, Uncut Edges and gilt Top, \$3.00.

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After Mr. Curtis' death in March, 1891, a large quantity of material relating to the proposed second volume was found among his papers, and this material was placed in the hands of Joseph Culbertson Clayton, who has prepared a volume which is here prepared for publication. His appendix contains detached writings of Mr. Curtis cognate to the main work, also historical documents, an annotated copy of the Constitution, and notes in the editor.

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THE DEVELOPMENT OF PERTHINE IN THE EPIC OF HOMER. By Alexander T. Henderson. 16mo, pp. 121. (American Banister Publishing Society.)

THE VIOLET. By Julia Margaret. With Illustrations. By Charles Davis Gibson. 12mo, pp. 210. (Longmans, Green & Co.)

THE INSPIRATION OF HISTORY. By James Mulcahy. 16mo, pp. 155. (Thomas Whittaker.)

THE STORY OF THE GREEKS. By H. A. Guerber. 12mo, pp. 288. (American Book Company.)

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